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MAY DAY FLY-BY

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- I. Last year's May Day parade in Moscow featured a single Type 37--the USSR's big new four-engine jet heavy bomber.
 - A. During parade rehearsals for this year's show--next Sunday--our observers have seen as many as ten Type 37's at a time, flying in formation.
 - B. These sightings mean that the Soviet heavy bomber program is substantially more advanced than we had estimated.
 - C. Our old estimates held that the USSR would not start series production of these jet heavy bombers until the third quarter of 1955.
 - D. On this basis, we calculated that the jet heavies would not appear in operational units of the Soviet Air Force until the end of 1956, and that only 50 heavies would be in service by mid-1957.
- II. The Air Force is presently revising these former estimates.
 - A. The Air Force believes that a simultaneous sighting of ten jet heavies means that at least seventeen must now be in existence.
 - B. From this, a preliminary Air Force calculation indicates that the Type 37 actually went into production in Aug '54 and that 55 of the jet heavies will be built by the end of 1955.

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- C. The Air Force further calculates that peak production—
 13 planes a month—should be reached by the end of
 '57, and that 247 of the jet heavies should be built
 by the end of '57.
- D. Range of the Type 37 (Map), in round-trip flight from Soviet Siberian bases (without benefit of "in-flight" refueling) covers the continental US in an arc from Santa Barbara to Duluth.
- III. Rehearsals for Sunday's air parade have also shown
 Western observer an entirely new large Soviet plane.
 - A. This is a four-engine (turbo-prop) swept-wing plane, of heavy bomber size and configuration:
 - 1. The intelligence community is at a loss to explain Soviet construction of a turbo-prop heavy "bomber."
 - 2. The jet-powered Type 37 is already in production and a large high-performance cargo plane (suitable for modification as an aerial tanker), rather than a second class of heavy bombers, would seem a more urgent Soviet military need.
 - 3. As can be seen (Map), possession of an aerial tanker would substantially improve the range and flexibility of the Soviet long range Air Force.
 - 4. A further twist to this puzzle is the fact that the Soviets have not exhibited a new four-engined cargo plane of any kind for the past 8 years (when the IL-18 and TU-70 were flown on May Day '47).

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